GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
PLANNING
LOK SABHA

STARRED QUESTION NO:328
ANSWERED ON:21.03.2007
EMPHASIS ON PRIORITY AREAS
Lagadapati Shri Rajagopal;Mandal Shri Sanat Kumar

Will the Minister of PLANNING be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Prime Minister has emphasized on the viability and regulation of a few priority areas such as rural economy, and public services, management of urban areas, financial system to ensure cost effective investment in infrastructure;

(b) if so, the details thereof, and

(c) the other steps being taken by the Union Government in this regard?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PLANNING (SHRI M. V. RAJASEKHARAN)

(a) to (c): A Statement is laid on the Table of the House.

STATEMENT REFERRED TO IN REPLY TO PARTS (a) TO (c) OF LOK SABHA STARRED QUESTION NO. 328 REGARDING `EMPHASIS ON PRIORITY AREAS` BY SHRI SANAT KUMAR MANDAL AND SHRI L. RAJAGOPAL, DUE FOR ANSWER ON 21st MARCH, 2007

(a) & (b) : The Prime Minister in an address at the Golden Jubilee Celebrations of the National Council of Applied Economic Research (NCAER) in December 2006 emphasized five challenges to engage the country over the next decade. These are :

(i) revitalisation of the rural economy,

(ii) improved delivery of essential public services,

(iii) improved management of urban areas,

(iv) preparing financial system for greater inclusion and increased global integration and

(v) establishing a regulatory culture to facilitate cost-effective private investment in infrastructure.

(c): For the rural economy the Approach Paper to the Eleventh Five Year Plan aims at achieving a growth rate of 4% in agriculture sector. For that there is a focus on improving rural connectivity, scaling up of irrigation potential creation, watershed management, rainwater harvesting and ground water recharge, revitalization of the extension system which links universities and best practices to farmers, etc. The Accelerated Irrigation Benefit Programme (AIBP) and Accelerated Power Development Reform Programme (APDRP) are being implemented to augment irrigation and power respectively. Bharat Nirman is a time-bound business plan for action in rural infrastructure over the four-year period (2005-2009). Under Bharat Nirman, action is proposed in the areas of irrigation, rural roads, rural housing, rural water supply, rural electrification and rural telecommunication connectivity. The Jawaharlal Nehru National Urban Renewal Mission (JNNURM) has been launched for a seven-year period beginning 2005-06. In the area of health, the National Rural Health Mission (NHRM) has been set up with the objective of providing accessible, affordable, accountable and effective health care delivery especially to the poor and the vulnerable sections of the society and bridge gaps in health care. In education, the Sarva Siksha Abhiyan (SSA) is being implemented to provide elementary education to all children in the 6-14 years age group. For global integration of the Indian economy, there has been a progressive reduction in the tariff rates. The Budget for 2007-8 has proposed reduction in the peak customs tariff rate to 10%. A Committee on Infrastructure has been set up under the Chairmanship of Prime Minister with the objective of initiating policies that ensure time-bound creation of world class infrastructure delivering services matching international standards and developing structures that maximize the role of public-private partnerships in the field of infrastructure.